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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [PINS](#) [KCRS](#) [IZ](#)
SUBJECT: PRT SALAH AD DIN: LOCAL OFFICIALS RESENT GOI
"INTERFERENCE"

REF: BAGHDAD 624

Classified By: PRT Leader David Stewart for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

This is a Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) Salah ad Din (SAD) reporting cable.

11. (C) SUMMARY: Salah ad Din (SAD) provincial government officials complain of Government of Iraq (GOI) interference in provincial affairs, such as the direct role the GOI has taken in Samarra's security, and its recent decision to expand its direct authority over the local police into two additional districts. SAD officials view the GOI's involvement as a serious encroachment on provincial authority. END SUMMARY.

GOI OPERATIONS IN SAD ANGER LOCALS

12. (C) On June 20, the Deputy Commander of MNC-I and the OPA Chief met with SaD Provincial Council (PC) Chairman Ahmed Abdullah, (AKA Abu Mazin), the two Deputy Governors Ahmed Ahmed Abed-al-Jabar and Dr. Ameen Azeez Jiwad, and other PC members. The 3/25 IBCT Commander and PRT Leader also attended. The primary concern expressed by SAD officials was the recent GOI decision to place SAD police districts in Balad and Dujayl under the control of the Samarra Operations Command (SOC). (NOTE: Following the terrorist bombing of the Golden Mosque in 2006, the GOI Prime Minister's Office moved a National Police (NP) force to Samarra and established the Samarra Operations Command (SOC) to secure the Mosque and the historic area around it during the restoration process, and secure the city against terrorist attacks. Local officials insist that Samarra enjoys good security now and it is time for the NP to move out. There is deep concern among Samarrans and provincial officials that the SOC is now essentially a GOI occupying force, put in place to further Shi'a interests in the city and province. END NOTE).

13. (C) PC Chairman Abu Mazin repeatedly reminded the US delegation that he was elected by the people, he represents them, and the people are afraid of GOI interference. He stated that he would rather have Peshmerga in Samarra than an expanded SOC authority. He maintained that the SOC presence "usurps the authority of the provincial leaders, who should be in charge of the police in the province." He was also critical of the GOI's decision to send the Iraqi Army (IA) to arrest former Ba'athist officers in Tikrit. Even though the IA had a warrant, Abu Mazin said that the area was under the jurisdiction of local police and that they should be the sole agency conducting arrests. Though the arrest incident was resolved peacefully, it is emblematic of the ongoing tension between the IA and the IP, and between the provincial and national governments. The other officials present expressed similar outrage at GOI's involvement in the province, which they view as a serious encroachment on provincial authority.

14. (C) Security clearly remains SAD Iraqis' primary concern, particularly with the impending withdrawal of U.S. military

forces from Iraqi cities on June 30. As Abu Mazin said,
"Violence will increase. The Central Government doesn't
represent us. We need Coalition Forces. People are afraid.
Time is short. The Central Government needs to respect local
governments."
FORD